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The matters that we have selected for unfavorable comment are of minor importance. The book remains one of the most satisfactory editions yet produced of a Greek play for schools and colleges, with English notes. It is uniformly marked by a sense of proportion and of perspective, qualities too often lacking in books of this class, as in oral instruction. The appearance of such books promises well for the future of classical scholarship as cultivated at American institutions of learning.

J. H. WRIGHT.

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The Common Tradition of the Synoptic Gospels, by EDWIN A. ABBOTT, D. D., and W. G. RUSHBROOKE, M. L. London, Macmillan & Co., 1884.

We have been meaning for some time to review this little book, not so much on account of the completeness of the theory which it unfolds, for it is by its own admission only fragmentary and preliminary to a much larger work, as because it affords an opportunity of discussing one or two critical questions connected with the new and careful investigation which is being made to revive the theory of an ancestral gospel (= Proto-Mark), from which the three synoptics made up their record.

Obviously there can be few questions of greater theological importance than those connected with the mutual relations of the Gospels, and certainly none of greater critical difficulty and uncertainty; but the American Journal of Philology is not the place to discuss great and vital problems in theology. Hence we shall confine ourselves to a brief sketch of the book and a few remarks. It contains an attempt to popularize the method of extraction of the common early Synoptic Tradition which Dr. Abbott explained in his article in the Encyclopedia Britannica, and which led to the beautiful volumes (known as *Synopticon*, which should be interpreted to mean Printer's Martyrdom), in which Mr. Rushbrooke exhibited to the eye, by varieties of colored ink and spacing of type, the common or solitary portions of the Gospels arranged in a quasi-harmonistic form.

We are first told that the Proto-Mark theory, if established, will be of great importance because, when we show that three separate writers have worked the primitive documents up in somewhat different manner, without mutual communication, we have a triple testimony of the truth of the matter contained, on the principle of Philo's dictum that "a sacred matter is tested by three witnesses" coupled with the Johannine statement that "there are three that bear record." We venture to say that no one will see in this argument anything more than an obscure reference to the doctrine of the Trinity; for according to the assumption, the three witnesses are one. The Proto-Mark theory may be correct enough, but this is hardly the way to commend the evidence of it to people who believed they had three witnesses on the point before Proto-Mark was started.

Attention is then drawn to the fact that in many parts of the Synoptics Mark contains all that is common to Matthew and Luke, from which fact the modern theory takes its departure. It is also shown that in many passages there is reason to believe that Matthew and Luke modified, or made more intelligible, or improved the language of Mark. All this is perfectly plausible and reasonable, and would agree almost as well with the theory of an Aramaic Proto-Mark as with a Greek original.

In order to arrange an English text of Synopticon in which these coincidences and divergences can be noted, it becomes necessary to have a standard text, and this is naturally enough taken to be the Revisers'. Ten pages are, therefore, employed in defence of the Revisers' Greek Text, the argument following closely upon the Introduction of Dr. Hort. We think that the authors have, to a certain extent, overrated the excellency of their text and certainly of its translation; nor are they always fortunate in the passages which they bring forward by way of illustration of the processes of textual corruption. Take, for example, the question of assimilation in Synoptic texts; according to the earlier theories it was comparatively easy to note that a certain place in Mark had assimilated a certain passage in Matthew; but when we admit that Matthew is itself worked up from Proto-Mark, the ground for predicating assimilation often disappears, and it may just as well be true that a passage has been dropped from the text of Mark in certain copies. And especially will this argument apply in those cases where a copy of one Gospel, as Mark, is charged with assimilating a passage from either of the two other Synoptics. (See the critical apparatus of Tregelles, *passim*, for such assumed double or alternative assimilations.) However, letting the question of the influence of the Proto-Mark theory over the rate of assimilation in the Synoptics stand on one side, we turn to the first passage in which assimilation on the part of texts of Mark is noted. "To take the first instance that comes to hand. In the description of Jesus walking on the sea, in Mark VI 47, we read merely that "the ship was in the midst of the sea," but Matthew, XIV 24, tells us that "the ship was many furlongs distant from the land, *being tossed* by the waves." Hence a MS. adds in *Mark also* the words 'being tossed.'" We must confess our ignorance, but we do not know what MS this is. We cannot find any trace of such a reading in the ordinary critical apparatuses. And even if it exist in some unrecorded cursive-variant, there is no need to assume any assimilation to the text of Matthew, for the very next verse in Mark, VI 48, has the word in question in a slightly different form, *καὶ ἰδὼν αὐτοὺς βασανιζομένους ἐν τῷ ἐλαίνειν*. It is, therefore, far more natural to explain such a textual error by a simple slip of the eye of the scribe in his own copy. Surely a better instance than this could be found of one of the most important and difficult textual phenomena.

Examples are given of the manner in which the assumed elliptical sentences of the Proto-Mark are variously interpreted by the different Synoptics; and of instances of variants caused by misunderstanding of the primitive text. One of the most seductive of these is the following, in which the unaccented ΗΜΗΝ of Mark is found interpreted variously as "ΗΜΗΝ or "ΗΜΗΝ by Matthew and Luke, thus:

Mark XIV 49: "I was daily with you in the temple teaching."

Matt. XXVI 55: "I sat daily (*ἐκαθεζόμην*) in the temple teaching."

Luke XXII 53: "When I was daily with you (*δυντος μου*) in the temple."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately for this brilliant combination, it is only a proof how a good scholar in his eagerness to make a point, may be duped into a forgetfulness of some elementary matters. "ΗΜΗΝ is likely enough. See on this form Rutherford, *New Phrynichus*, p. 240. "ΗΜΗΝ is strictly poetical and utterly unlikely in this sphere of the language; Mark would have used *ἐκάθημην* as he uses *ἐκάθητο* (X 46)—B. L. G.

There is much to be said against this ingenious argument; for when the writer states that the Greek for 'was' in Mark is here  $\text{HMHN}$ , a non-classical form not used elsewhere by this Evangelist, we might be led to infer ( $\alpha$ ) that Mark uses elsewhere some other form; but he does not; ( $\beta$ ) that Matthew was disposed to misunderstand the auxiliary form from the habit of using another form, which is also not the case, for Matthew uses  $\text{HMHN}$  regularly; and in fact there is no other form employed by the New Testament writers for the 1st person singular of the imperfect auxiliary; ( $\gamma$ ) it follows, therefore, that there was no special reason to account Luke's reading as a deliberate modification of Proto-Mark; since he uses the very word in question in six places in the Acts.

The other examples which are given labor under greater difficulty. For instance, in the language describing the Transfiguration, we have in Mark and in Luke the expression  $\text{ΠΟΙΗCΩΜΕΝ ΤΡΕΙC CΚΗΝΑC}$ , but in Matthew  $\text{ΠΟΙΗCΩ ὩΔΕ ΚΤΕ}$ , which Abbott explains as follows: the original tradition being that preserved by Mark and Luke, the words appear in Matthew "as if it were *in two words*,  $\text{ΠΟΙΗCΩ ΜΕΝ}$ ; then the word  $\text{ΜΕΝ}$  appearing to make no sense, was changed into its correlative  $\text{ΔΕ}$ , and  $\text{ΠΟΙΗCΩ ΔΕ}$  was easily changed (and the more easily because there is  $\text{ὩΔΕ}$  in the preceding line) into  $\text{ΠΟΙΗCΩ ὩΔΕ}$ , *i. e.* I will make here. The intolerable egotism of this reading, 'I will make,' forced the editor of this Gospel to insert at least the qualification, 'if thou wilt,' and hence the present erroneous version of Matthew." According to this explanation, there are four separate stages of error *before the text of Matthew is reached*, each of which may be reckoned as requiring one transcription. First the reading of  $\text{ΠΟΙΗCΩ ΜΕΝ}$  in two words (when we know, by the bye, that there is no evidence of any early texts that are divided, and, therefore, the error must have been a mental one and capable of immediate correction); then the two corrections and addition. Is this a likely conjecture? And be it remembered that there is no consensus of editors on the reading in Matthew: (Tregelles reads  $\text{ΠΟΙΗCΩΜΕΝ ὩΔΕ}$ ).

A far simpler suggestion would be that the original text of Matthew read  $\text{ΠΟΙΗCΩΜΕΝ}$  with Mark and Luke, and that a single early copy read three letters from a previous line, and thus produced the text as given in the three Greek uncials that attest it. At all events, we have as much right to make a single correction at the back of three Greek MSS as Dr. Abbott has to make four successive ones at the back of all texts properly called the Gospel of Matthew.

From what we have said, my friends of the Synopticon will see that there is nothing which I enjoy so much (after making conjectural restorations or explanations myself), as finding fault with conjectures made by fellow-students. They will not infer that we join in the foolish objection to conjectural emendations in N. T. texts. On the contrary we go much further than Dr. Abbott in this matter, and do not admit that the day of conjectures is passed in any book of the New Testament. Only the man that would deal with them must be armed with iron and brass, and plenty of paleographic reasons which do not admit of alternatives. Meanwhile we are on our watch-tower for the promised and more extended volume.

J. RENDEL HARRIS.